

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 28
Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: **Monitoring Outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of
Community Safety: Services for Older People and
Victims of Sexual Violence**

Date of Meeting: **31st October 2011**

Report of: **Strategic Director: Communities**

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 This report enables the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor and track progress on the scrutiny recommendations made to the Executive on older people and on support services for victims of sexual offences. The recommendations from the two scrutiny reviews and updates appear as appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That Members consider the action taken against these recommendations, and provide feedback.
- (2) That the Committee determines whether further progress reports relating to these scrutiny reviews are required.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Scrutiny Review of Older People and Community Safety

A cross-party working group of Members of the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC) comprising Councillors Warren Morgan, Tony Janio and Ian Davey, considered priority issues for scrutiny in October 2008. The group identified the importance of fear of crime to older people in the City and improved information for older people; as a key

issue. This had recently been raised at a Community Safety Forum meeting by the Director of Age Concern.

3.2 Environment and Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC) subsequently agreed to establish a scrutiny panel on older people and community safety with a remit to investigate:

- To what extent are the views of older people known, regarding community safety?
- Do older people have specific concerns about safety in the community?
- How can older people be helped to feel safer in the community?

3.3 Councillors Mo Marsh (Chair) and Amy Kennedy, and former councillors David Smart and David Watkins with co-optee from the Older People's Council, John Eyles, served on the Panel.

3.4 The Panel's completed report was endorsed by the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 September 2009 and referred to the Council's Executive. Cabinet considered the report on 9 December 2009 and agreed the actions as detailed in the implementation plan (Appendix 1) The Scrutiny report and cabinet response were reported to full Council on 28 January 2010.

3.5 The Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011 – 2013, now includes a priority and outcome which aims to achieve 'Older People feeling safer and at less risk of victimisation'. This overarching outcome incorporates aims of services being accessible and more responsive to the needs of older people. The implementation plan that was drawn up following the conclusion of the scrutiny review (appendix 1), is now incorporated within the Community Safety Strategy as the delivery plan for this priority area. Performance indicators and 'Parallel Plans' which set out actions to achieve the delivery plan are also identified.

3.6 While the developments described above are welcomed, delivery of the action plan (and therefore of the scrutiny recommendations) has been ad-hoc, dependent upon the extent to which actions can be integrated within committed existing services and resources. However, the Partnership Community Safety Team has recently concluded a restructuring of its Hate Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour functions. One result of that is to incorporate co-ordination of the work programme to increase the safety of older people, into a community safety manager post. That change took effect at the beginning of October. Future updates on the work programme and scrutiny recommendations will therefore show the progress that has been made.

4 The Scrutiny Review Of Services For Victims Of Sexual Offences

4.1 The scrutiny panel comprised former councillors David Watkins (Chairman), Juliet McCaffery (Deputy Chairman), Averil Older and Councillor Alex Phillips. It was formed following a notice of motion and referral from full Council.

4.2 The terms of reference for the panel were agreed as:

- To gain an understanding of the nature and prevalence of sexual violence, particularly in the Brighton and Hove context
- To identify what support services for victims of sexual violence are already available to Brighton and Hove residents
- To identify where there are gaps in the provision of support services
- To identify what referral routes and pathways between different statutory agencies and support services currently exist, and how these can be developed further to increase support to victims of sexual violence
- To investigate ways to encourage a co-ordinated and holistic approach to the provision of support services for victims of sexual violence
- To investigate ways to encourage a more strategic and integrated approach to planning and commissioning support services
- To identify ways to ensure that support services can be sustainably resourced
- To identify ways to consult with service users about the support services they are accessing

4.3 The Panel's Report of findings and recommendations was agreed by 21 June 2010 ECSOSC. Cabinet on 9 December 2010 considered the recommendations and agreed the actions in the implementation plan (Appendix 2).

4.4 Significant progress has been made in the delivery of almost all the recommended actions and that progress is set out in Appendix 2. Of particular note is the establishment of the Sussex wide joint commissioning arrangements of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre which combines clinical and forensic services for victims of rape and sexual assault and the joint commissioning arrangements for counselling and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor services. The joint commissioning arrangements result in 'value for money' investment while preserving the local delivery of essential support services which also link with rape crisis and other targeted initiatives in Brighton & Hove for those who are most vulnerable and at risk.

4.5 The Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011 – 2013 includes a priority which aims to 'reduce sexual violence and abuse'. Appendix 3 is the section of the Strategy which describes the comprehensive scope of the work being undertaken to achieve the overarching and related outcomes. As can be seen from the information within that Appendix, the outcomes to be achieved range from prevention (eg. increased knowledge and skills about forming healthy relationships) to providing increased support to victims through the criminal justice process and post sentence of the perpetrator.

4.6 Monitoring of performance indicators and responding to the analysis of data is important to the achievement of the outcomes. The indicators are also set out in appendix 3: they range from monitoring the number of police recorded sexual offences (we are seeking to increase reporting) to the percentage of finalised court cases with a successful outcome. Services delivered to victims from the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and the provision of local support services are also closely monitored.

5. Monitoring Scrutiny Reviews

The arrangements for monitoring the outcome of scrutiny recommendations are as reported for 20mph scrutiny review which appears elsewhere on this agenda.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 A number of the scrutiny panel meetings (in relation to the safety of older people) were advertised as public meetings, providing opportunities for residents of the city to share their views and experiences. Their information was taken into account as evidence. Within both scrutiny processes, the panels invited a range of organisations to give evidence and to respond to questions from panel members. Community Safety Forum meetings provided further opportunities for consultation.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

7.1 The overall approach is to deliver the implementation plans within existing resources or, where resources are required, to consider the allocation of those through the Commissioning process.

Legal Implications:

7.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives the police and local authority an equal duty to reduce crime and disorder and fear of crime and improve community safety. Requirements are also placed upon partners within the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership by this and subsequent legislation and guidance. The scrutiny process and the recommendations further the delivery of these legal provisions.

Equalities Implications:

7.3 The implementation of the recommendations will improve the lives of those who are vulnerable because of older age, disability or ill health or because they have been victims of sexual offences. Equality Impact Assessments of the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy and action plans will be completed.

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 Implementation of the recommendations to address the findings of scrutiny will greatly assist in the overall delivery of the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011 to 2013 in which a number of sustainability objectives are identified.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.5 The overall purpose of the scrutiny process which is the subject of these reports was to reduce fear of crime, increase understanding of effective action taken by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, increase the safety of older people and to reduce sexual violence and abuse.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

7.6 The recommendations are designed to reduce actual risks that may be experienced by older people as well as to re-assure them that they are in fact, safer than they perceive. However, reducing fear of crime is in itself of benefit to the welfare of older people and therefore results in risk reduction.

7.7 The recommendations in relation to services for victims of sexual violence aim to bring a greater number of perpetrators to justice, thereby reducing further risks to the individual and to residents and visitors to Brighton & Hove.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.8 In relation to the scrutiny review of community safety services for older people, the recommendations will bring benefits for all of those in the city who are over 50 years of age.

7.9 In relation to the scrutiny review of community safety services for victims of sexual violence, the recommendations are bringing significant benefits to those victims.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1 Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Older People and Community Safety and progress against the recommendations.
- 2 Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of services for victims of Sexual Violence and progress against those recommendations.
- 3 Extract from the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011 – 2013 in relation to the priority crime area ‘Sexual Violence, Abuse and Exploitation, the Sex Industry and Trafficking’

Documents In Members’ Rooms/ Background Documents

None.

